

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Advisory #3: Update on Influenza Vaccine Supply

TO: Health care providers involved in the administration of influenza vaccine and those who may have patients seeking a vaccine

FROM: Dr. Cort Lohff, State Epidemiologist
Vermont Department of Health

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UPDATE - Supply of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season - Nationally

- As stated in the Advisory #2 (dated October 21), four manufacturers are supplying influenza vaccine to the U.S. for the 2005-06 flu season. All four of the manufacturers are producing different quantities of their vaccine, and distributing their products on different timetables. The following is an update on each manufacturer:
 - **sanofi pasteur** expects to produce 60 million doses of vaccine this season, has been distributing partial shipments (or in some cases full shipments) and plans to fill the rest of the orders in the next several weeks.
 - **GlaxoSmithKline** expects to produce 7.5 million doses of vaccine this season, has been distributing partial shipments (or in some cases full shipments) and plans to fill the rest of the orders in the next several weeks.
 - **Chiron**, which recently announced it will not be able to meet its earlier projections of 18 – 26 million doses, is still not projecting how many doses it will ultimately be able to produce nor the timing of its distribution. However, Chiron has been distributing its product and will continue to do so as additional vaccine is produced.
 - **MedImmune** expects to distribute 3 million doses of its product this season.

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- According to CDC, up to 90 million doses could potentially be distributed this season in the U.S., with up to 80 million of those doses distributed by the end of November. In contrast, only 61 million doses were distributed last year.

NEW - Supply of influenza vaccine for the 2005–06 flu season - Vermont

- A recent survey of hospitals and Visiting Nurses Associations (VNA), Home Health Agencies and nursing homes revealed that approximately one-half of all doses ordered have been received. However, because of flu vaccine purchase practices, not all providers have received one-half of their order – some have received all, others partial shipments and still others none. As additional vaccine is distributed into Vermont, these shortfalls of course will improve.

UPDATE - Availability of influenza vaccine for Vaccine for Children (VFC) Providers

- The remaining supply of flu vaccine for VFC-enrolled providers is expected to be shipped to the Vermont Department of Health by mid-November. VFC-enrolled providers in need of additional vaccine should contact their Health Department District Office.

UPDATE - Steps to assess gaps in vaccine supply

- To better assess the current and projected supply of vaccine in state, the Vermont Department of Health and our many partners will continue to conduct surveys of all hospitals, nursing homes and VNA/Home Health Agencies. This information will inform the Health Department, our partners and the public on where there are gaps in supply, guide any decision-making processes, and help to determine where additional vaccine might be targeted.

UPDATE - Steps to ensure access to vaccine to those in priority groups

- Given the uncertainties in available doses of influenza vaccine and the timing of its distribution, CDC has previously recommended that only those in priority groups receive influenza vaccine until October 24, 2005. After that date, all persons would be eligible to receive the vaccine. The priority groups are:
 - persons aged ≥ 65 years
 - residents of long term care facilities
 - persons aged 2-64 years with co-morbid conditions
 - children aged 6-23 months
 - pregnant women
 - health-care personnel who provide direct patient care
 - household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children aged < 6 months

NOTE: This prioritization does not apply to FluMist[®], which should be used only with healthy non-pregnant persons aged 5 to 49.

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- However, given the continued uncertainties in the supply of vaccine in Vermont, providers might consider taking steps to ensure that people who fall within one or more priority groups have access to vaccine:
 - **Providers who have vaccine** might consider deferring vaccination of persons who are NOT in one or more of the priority groups until such time as their own supply is adequate to meet the needs of those in the priority groups. Providers might also work within their own organizations or agencies to move vaccine to meet the needs of those in priority groups.
 - **For providers who currently have no vaccine or only a limited supply** and are therefore not able to meet the needs of all those persons in one or more of the priority groups, please inform your patients there may be other options available for them to receive vaccine (e.g., through one of more community-based clinics). Also please inform your patients that vaccinations can still be effective even if given into late November and December (when supplies are expected to increase). The influenza season typically doesn't peak until January or February.

NEW – Additional instructions to providers

- **If you ordered vaccine through one or more distributors**, continue to remind these distributors that you still want this vaccine. Distributors may cancel orders with manufacturers if they think they will not be able to sell the vaccine.
- **If you are unsure of the amount of vaccine that you will be receiving and the timing of its distribution**, please call your distributor or the manufacturer directly, depending on how you purchased vaccine.
- **If you have surplus vaccine**, please call the Vermont Department of Health at 800 464-4343. We can work with you to identify one or more providers that may need vaccine.
- **If you have patients seeking a vaccine**, please continue to inform them that vaccinations can still be effective if given into late November and December (when supplies are expected to increase).

Providers with questions related to this Advisory are encouraged to call 800 464-4343. Also please refer to the Vermont Department of Health website: www.healthyvermonters.info for important information and updates related to influenza and influenza vaccine.